

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF DEFENSE MOBILIZATION
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

April 25, 1951

Honorable Robert Ramspeck
Chairman, Civil Service Commission
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Ramspeck:

As you are well aware, there is a shortage in this country of professional persons proficient in the languages of other countries and with special knowledge of their social and economic conditions. This shortage has been of increasing concern to those agencies of government which depend on a continuing adequate supply of such specialists to carry out effectively their immediate and long-term assignments.

Our ability to carry forward our international security programs will depend in large measure upon the availability of trained specialists for work in critical areas of the world. Such specialists are no less vital to the national interest than physical scientists.

Primary responsibility for the maintenance of an adequate supply of trained persons must rest upon the various established educational institutions and foundations. Many of our private foundations, learned societies, and educational institutions have been concerned with this problem for some time. It is due largely to their foresight that a number of institutions now offer specialized training in the languages and problems of foreign areas.

Experience has demonstrated, however, that the effective conduct of international security programs requires some provision within the Government for training area and language specialists. Authority presently vested in the Department of Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Department of State has proved of considerable value in maintaining a supply of such personnel. In addition, the educational programs conducted under the Fulbright Act and the Smith-Mundt Act have contributed significantly.

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As you know, this matter was discussed at a recent meeting of the Manpower Policy Committee of the Office of Defense Mobilization. As a result of this discussion, I am requesting, as Chairman of that Committee, that you as Chairman of the Civil Service Commission take the leadership in having a report prepared as to requirements for trained area specialist personnel in relation to available training facilities. We are requesting the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Labor, the Chairman of the National Security Resources Board, the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, the Economic Cooperation Administrator, and the Federal Security Administrator to designate persons to serve on this Committee.

It is our feeling that this report should (1) estimate the long-run requirements of Federal agencies in relation to aggregate needs for such personnel, (2) examine the extent to which the numbers of people trained and the areas of the world covered in existing training centers are adequate to meet these requirements, (3) consider the extent to which the Federal Government should foster any necessary expansion of such training, and (4) examine existing authorities available for this purpose and develop any additional proposals required to meet the needs.

I am sure that this report will be of considerable value to this Office in developing over-all plans for assuring the maintenance of an adequate supply of trained specialists required to carry out our national security programs.

We would appreciate your submitting your report on this matter as early as practicable.

Sincerely yours,

s/ Arthur S. Flemming
Assistant to the Director
(Manpower)

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